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MEXICAN FARE IN A DANCE CLUB {page 26}

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Brutal bar beating a murder, jury finds

Charlie Manasseri convicted of second-degree murder for mortally wounding Brian Fudge Second accused man, George Kenny, convicted of assault causing bodily harm for punching Fudge outside pool hall

An Ottawa jury convicted Charlie Manasseri of second-degree murder for beating Brian Fudge to death on New Year's Eve seven years ago.

A second man, George Kenny, was convicted of two counts of assault causing bodily harm for punching Fudge and his friend, Dan Narraway, after Manasseri's brutal attack on Fudge at Le Skratch pool hall on Merrivale Road.

Brian's father, Derek, said the delays in the case — the latest of which was a last-minute plea that was ultimately abandoned — was hard on the family.

"In seven years, I came close to losing faith in the system of justice," he said. "In the end, it did prevail."

The family was present through the investigation and preliminary hearings, living through so many repetitions of the sad and disturbing testimony that he sometimes hardened to it, he said.

"But the front of my mind is this loving, intelligent, happy-go-lucky son," Derek said. "And that's never going away."

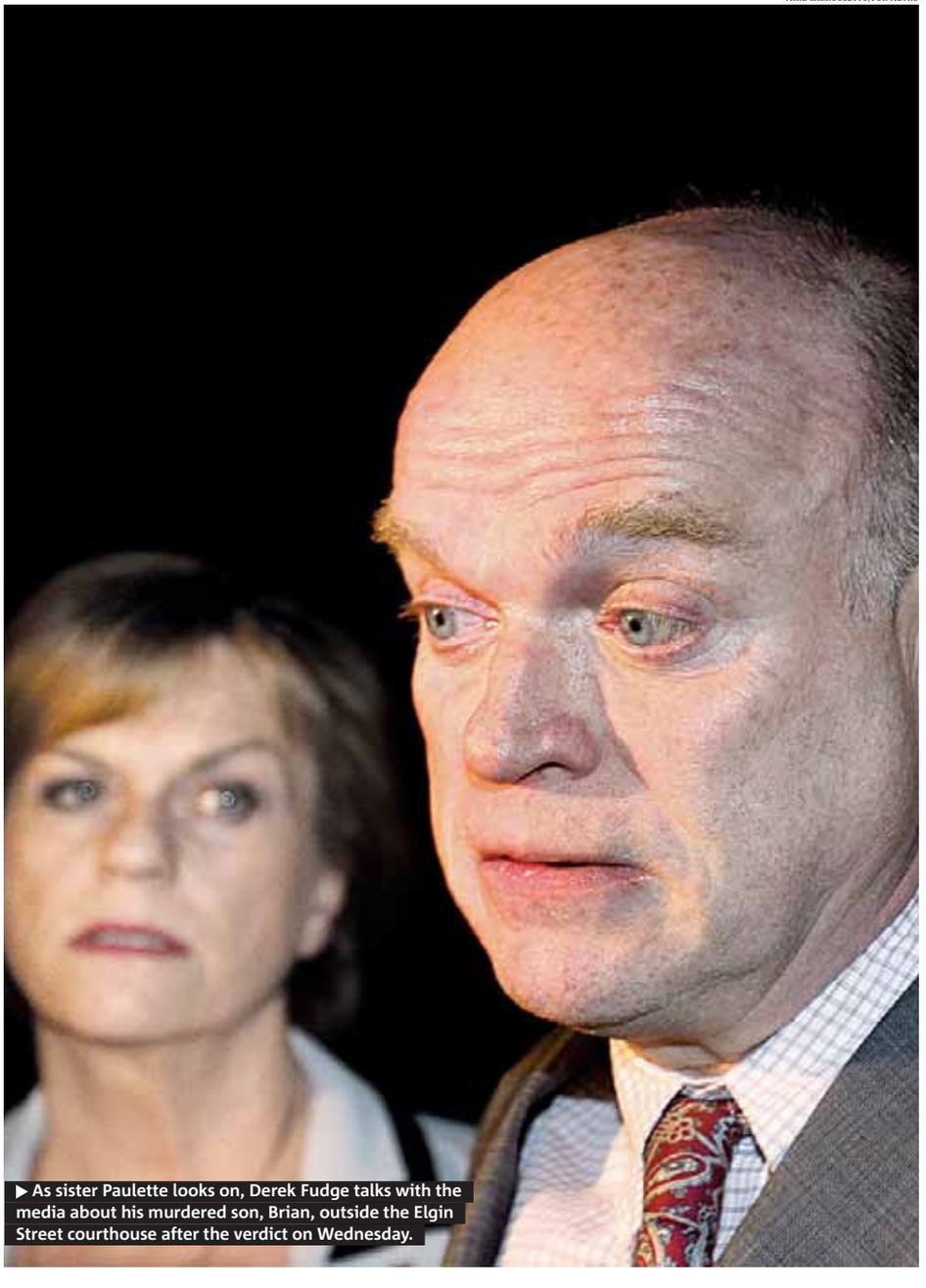
Manasseri was sentenced to life in prison, with no chance of parole for 10 years. Kenny was allowed to spend the night at home with his parents and will appear in court Thursday morning for sentencing.

Before sentencing, Brian Fudge's parents and his brother, Steve, read victim-impact statements. Steve Fudge, six years younger than Brian, said he will never get to fully know the loving brother who had always let him know what the years ahead of him would hold.

"The worst thing is watching what my parents have gone through," he said.

JESSICA SMITH

MIKE CARROCCETTO/FOR METRO



▶ As sister Paulette looks on, Derek Fudge talks with the media about his murdered son, Brian, outside the Elgin Street courthouse after the verdict on Wednesday.

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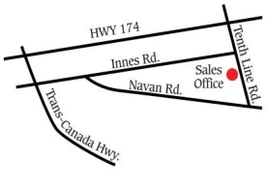

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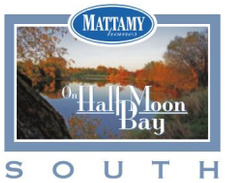

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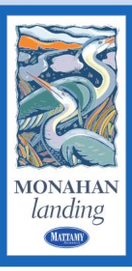

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Rideau Centre better fit for LRT station, report says

An LRT station planned for the National Arts Centre could be moved to the Rideau Centre — something area businesses have been hoping for.

A report going to the city's finance and economic development committee March 6 suggests the Rideau station should not be built under the canal and attached to the NAC, but under Rideau Street, east of Sussex instead.

"The business community here all along thought the station needed to come down the street," said Peggy DuCharme, executive director of the Downtown Rideau Business Improvement Area.

The move would allow the station and the train tunnel to be built at a shallower depth and provide commuters better access to the ByWard Market, the report says.

One station entrance would be in what is slated to be an expanded part of the Rideau Centre near the south side of Rideau Street and Nicholas Street. Other station entry spots such as the ByWard Market may be suggested by firms bidding to build the LRT.

JESSICA SMITH

JOE LOFARO/METRO

▶ Students will no longer be able to visit summer-job centres beginning this spring as the federal government pushes its online resources for youth employment instead. Government-service offices, such as the one in this photo, often house student-job centres.

Student-job centres getting axed

News comes as youth unemployment rate hovers around 14 per cent

The federal government is closing its student summer-job centres across Canada this year to save $6.5 million annually as more students go online to look for work.

But a University of Ottawa career services co-ordinator said there's a false impression that all the opportunities are online.

"The overwhelming number of the opportunities in the job market are not officially advertised in newspapers or on corporate websites," said David Rodas-Wright, employer relations co-ordinator. "A lot of employment opportunities are filled by people basically networking with one another and transferring from one opportunity to another."

The centres will not open this spring for the first time in nearly 40 years. Many of the centres were themselves sources of employment for university students who staffed them.

"Those services are definitely helpful to students," said Rodas-Wright, adding they could offer the guidance and structure that students need and that they might not get online.

"In my opinion, I think (students) need all the resources they can get, and I don't necessarily agree with the statement that you can basically find everything online."
DAVID RODAS-WRIGHT
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

John Pfaff, a Grade 12 Lisgar Collegiate Institute student, is actively looking for a summer job before he starts university. He's doing it the old-fashioned way — talking to friends and looking for "Help Wanted" signs in storefront windows. He said he didn't know there were government-run job centres for people like him.

"Kijiji will post (job) ads, but those get thousands of emails per post, and it's really hard to be distinguished from those tonnes of resumés they get," said Pfaff. "I think a student centre sounds like it would be easier for a student to actually get a job."

JOE LOFARO/WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 news

Gadgets in the bedroom are not only affecting sleep; they're also taking a toll on couple's love lives, say sleep experts. Scan code for story.

To scan 2D barcodes in Metro, download the free ScanLife app at 2dscan.com.

On the web at metronews.ca

Tornadoes laid waste to the U.S. Midwest yesterday. Watch at metronews.ca/video.

News in brief

Jazzfest founder a French knight

SWING VOTE. Jacques Emond, founding programming director of the Ottawa Jazz Festival, was appointed Chevalier of France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres on Tuesday by French ambassador Philippe Zeller. Emond, who retired in 2010, organized the lineup for 30 years, bringing in French artists such as Renaud Garcia-Fons, Jacky Terrasson and Benoit Delbecq. METRO

Museum obtains Victoria Cross

WAR HERO. The Canadian War Museum has acquired the Victoria Cross awarded to a First World War stretcher bearer, Pvte. John Francis Young, who served with the 87th Infantry Battalion and was honoured for bravery in a battle near Drury, France, in 1918. METRO

Two people face gun charges

CRIME. The arrests were made Tuesday after police searched a Willow Street home. Ariel Garley, 20, is charged with assault and eight weapons offences. Caitlyn Powder-Morin, 19, is charged with two gun offences. Police seized 120 rounds of ammunition and a gun case. METRO

Man arrested for sex offences

INVESTIGATION. Daniel Miller, 67, of Pembroke, faces three counts of gross indecency and three of indecent assault for incidents police say took place between 1970 and 1980. He will appear in court March 28. METRO

New exhibition tells a whale of a tale

Whales Tohora opens Friday at Museum of Nature and runs to Sept. 3

JOE LOFARO
@METRONEWS.CA

A New Zealand museum curator who saw a beached male sperm whale on the shore of western Auckland in 2003 has helped bring the beast's skeleton to Ottawa for a new exhibition opening Friday.

At a media preview on Wednesday, Dr. Susan Waugh, a senior curator of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, shared her story about the whale, which is now a 58-foot-long artifact at the Canadian Museum of Nature as part of the travelling exhibition Whales Tohora.

Waugh said 12 whales washed up on the shore in Auckland, and they were shared among aboriginals, who use the whales' teeth and bones for cultural artifacts.

"They retained this big one and they gave it to us so that we could keep it and tell its story," Waugh said.

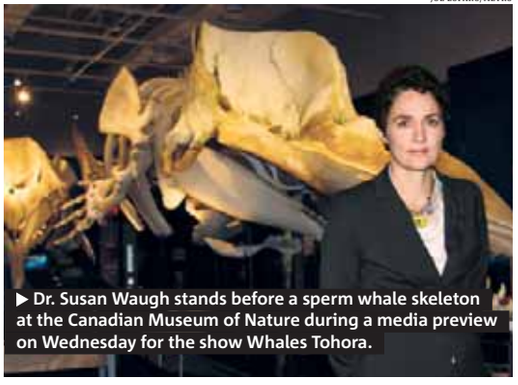
The male is accompanied by the skeleton of a smaller female sperm whale on the fourth floor of the museum.

Through interactive booths and walls of storytelling displays, visitors learn about the sea creatures, their relationship with the indigenous Maori people and whalers.

Waugh said she hopes people reflect on their own impact on the environment when they leave the exhibition.

"It would be nice if people thought about the choices they're making in their lifestyles and think about what impact (they're) having by throwing away plastic or consumer choices they're making," she said.

JOE LOFARO/METRO



▶ Dr. Susan Waugh stands before a sperm whale skeleton at the Canadian Museum of Nature during a media preview on Wednesday for the show Whales Tohora.

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Pierre Poutine? It's all a smear, says PM

Angry Harper accuses NDP, Liberals in Commons
But what's the truth about Separatist St. in Joliette?

A mysterious "Pierre Poutine" and Prime Minister Stephen Harper were front and centre in the robocalls furor on Wednesday.

Harper said allegations the Tories were behind misleading and harassing calls to voters in the last federal election are nothing but a smear campaign by the NDP and Liberals.

"The Conservative party can say absolutely, definitively, it has no role in any of this," Harper told the House of Commons.

He also added a new element to his counter-attack when he challenged the NDP and Liberals to provide proof to Elections Canada that the Tories were behind the calls.

Elections Canada is investigating reports that voters in Guelph got calls from a 450 area code number directing them to the wrong polling station.

Phone records show the number behind the calls belonged to a cellphone registered to "Pierre Poutine" of "Separatist Street" in Joliette, Que.

Elections Canada's chief investigator says in a sworn court document the name was likely used to cover the tracks of whoever was behind the calls.

Phone records show the number registered to "Pierre Poutine" twice called Edmonton-based call centre RackNine Inc., on April 30 and May 1.

The records also show phones associated with Guelph Tory candidate Marty Burke and the Guelph Conservative riding association made 31 calls to RackNine between March 26 and early May.

The court document says it is reasonable to believe Burke's campaign did business with RackNine and that the relationship is related to the calls.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RackNine's case

- RackNine has confirmed someone used its automated dialling service to make diversionary calls.
- The company insists it did nothing wrong and is helping Elections Canada and police in the investigation.

PAWEL DWULIT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ A high-powered group of world business leaders and politicos want the Stephen Harper government to stop the "destructive, expensive and ineffective" war on drugs.

LUMINARIES BLAST C-10'S POT APPROACH

Sir Richard Branson and other world business and political leaders want Canada to rethink its stance on marijuana.

The leaders want Ottawa to scrap mandatory minimum sentences for minor pot offences in Bill C-10 and even look at legalizing the drug.

"Tougher drug law enforcement tactics such as mandatory minimum sentencing … will put a huge strain on Canadian taxpayers," says a letter released by the group.

"(They) will not have the intended effect of creating safer communities, and will instead further entrench" organized crime.

The group is chaired by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, former president of Brazil, and includes ex-presidents of Colombia, Mexico and Switzerland, and former U.S. secretary of state George Shultz.

MATT KIELTYKA IN VANCOUVER

Seven so far will sit on jury in Tori trial

Seven people have been chosen for a jury in the trial of a man accused in the death of eight-year-old Victoria Stafford.

Michael Rafferty, 31, pleads not guilty in London, Ont., to first-degree murder, sexual assault causing bodily harm and kidnapping.

Tori disappeared in Woodstock, Ont., on April 8, 2009. Her body was found three months later.

Terri-Lynne McClintic has already been convicted of first-degree murder.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

7

Five women and two men have been selected for a jury of 12 and two alternates.

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Storms ravage U.S. Midwest

At least 9 killed, dozens injured after deadly tornadoes slam region

A powerful storm system that produced multiple reports of tornadoes lashed the U.S. Midwest early Wednesday, laying waste to small towns in Illinois, Missouri and Kansas. At least nine people were killed.

An apparent twister rolled through Branson, Mo., just before 1 a.m. and seemed to hopscotch up the city's main roadway, ripping roofs off hotels and damaging some of the city's famed music theatres dangerously close to the start of the heavy tourism season. More than 30 people were reported hurt, mostly with cuts and bruises.

At least six people were killed in the southern Illinois town of Harrisburg after a storm levelled much of the community of 9,000 people.

"The theatre next to me kind of exploded.... It went everywhere. Power lines are down. Windows are blown out."
BRANSON DINER OWNER

In Missouri, one person was killed in a trailer park in the town of Buffalo. Two more fatalities were reported in other areas. From Tuesday night into Wednesday morning, at least 16 tornado sightings were reported from Nebraska and Kansas across southern Missouri to Illinois and Kentucky, according to the storm centre, an arm of the National Weather Service.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DARRIN PHEGLEY/THE GLEANER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Kendra McKinley pulls a flag from the debris of her grandparents' home in Henderson, Ky.

Fishing vessel delays Costa Allegra rescue, official says

A disabled cruise ship called Costa Allegra will spend an extra 10 to 12 hours at sea without electricity, air conditioning or toilet facilities because a French fishing vessel that was first to respond to the drifting cruiser refused to give way to faster tug boats, a Seychelles government official said Wednesday.

A spokesman for the cruise line denied that the tow would have been faster with the tugs and said the disabled cruise ship was always scheduled to reach the Seychelles' main port on Thursday.

The government minister, Joel Morgan, said that the cruise ship likely would have arrived in port Wednesday night local time if the tugs had been allowed to take over.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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MAXIM SHIPENKOV/POOL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Vladimir Putin

Putin warns of a rumble

Russian presidential candidate predicts unsanctioned protests post-election will result in violence

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin warned that his opponents could provoke unrest after Sunday's presidential election, even going so far as killing a prominent opposition figure to stoke outrage against his government.

Putin is all but certain to regain the presidency, but his allegations Wednesday reflect heightened tensions four days before the vote and nervousness about the protests expected to follow.

"They are looking among well-known people for a sacrificial victim," said Putin. "They could, I'm sorry, knock someone off and then blame the authorities."

Evidence of widespread vote-rigging in favour of Putin's party in December's parliamentary election set off a series of protests to demand an end to Putin's 12-year rule.

The opposition is pushing authorities to allow a post-election protest at a site close to the Kremlin. The government has refused the demand, offering other more distant locations instead.

The organizers have rejected that offer, raising the threat of violence. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Volunteers to monitor the vote

30,000
The estimated number of complaints filed after Russia's last parliamentary election.

Until a few months ago, Sergei Rassypnov, a real-estate agent, cared little about politics and Vladmir Putin.

That all changed in December, when evidence of rampant election fraud by Putin's party triggered a wave of protest: Suddenly, for legions of urban Russians, apathy and indifference was transformed into a startling new activism.

Today, Rassypnov is among tens of thousands of Russians who have signed up to monitor this Sunday's presidential election, in which Prime Minister Putin aims to reclaim the presidency he held for eight years. Most are volunteering for the first time, no longer willing to tolerate a situation in which people have little confidence their vote will be counted honestly. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Pop music group The Monkees, clockwise from top left, Peter Tork, Mickey Dolenz, Mike Nesmith and Davy Jones, are shown in this 1966 photo.

HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Monkees frontman dies

Davy Jones, the heartthrob singer who helped propel the made-for-TV rock band The Monkees to the top of the pop charts as an American version of The Beatles, died of a heart attack Wednesday. He was 66. Born in Manchester, England, Jones had stylishly long hair, boyish good looks and a British accent that endeared him to legions of screaming young fans.

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N. Korea suspends nuclear activities

North Korea has agreed to suspend uranium enrichment and nuclear and long-range missile tests in a breakthrough in negotiations with the United States, which is set to provide food aid in return.

The rare simultaneous announcements in Pyongyang and Washington pointed toward an easing of nuclear tensions under new leader Kim Jong-un.

It could also clear the way for the resumption of multi-nation disarmament-for-aid talks that North Korea withdrew from in 2009.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

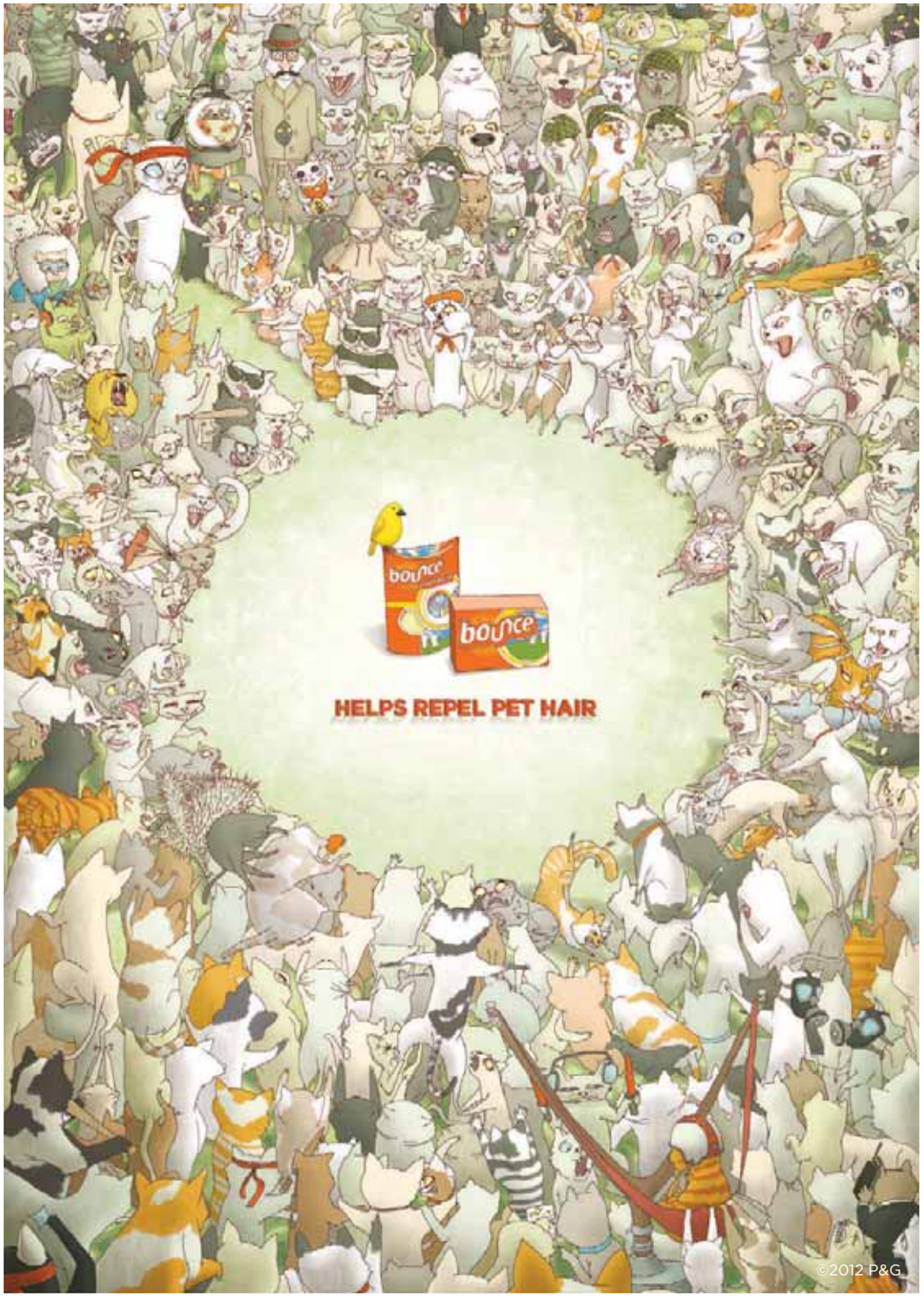
Charges pending in Craigslist-baby prank

U.S. police say charges are pending against a teenager in the U.S. state of Mississippi for pulling a prank on a friend when he advertised a free baby on Craigslist using the friend's cellphone number as the contact information.

Police Chief Don Byington would not identify the youths involved, but told The Clarion-Ledger that the posting was "a bad practical joke."

Byington says the 18-year-old took a photo of an unknown baby boy and placed the ad on Craigslist.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Khadr headed North

Report claims Canadian convicted of terrorism to be moved to Ontario

Is Canadian Omar Khadr destined to leave the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to serve the remainder of his sentence in Guantanamo North?

A report this week in Montreal's LaPresse stated that the 25-year-old Toronto-born Khadr will be imprisoned at Millhaven immigration centre in Ontario, derisively dubbed Guantanamo North.

The $3.2-million, six-bunk facility was built in 2006 to house non-Canadian terrorism suspects held on controversial national-security certificates.

Despite its name, and aside from the isolation, the Millhaven facility is hardly comparable to the Guantanamo cell where Khadr is now — or to many of Canada's federal prisons where he could be held.

As Hassan Almrei, who was held there before a federal court judge dismissed his case, said in a 2007 interview: "I'm lucky to be detained in this country. I'm not denying that. (But) they're not talking about the colour of the clothes, it's the principle. The principle of Guantanamo Bay."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

JANET HAMLIN/POOL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Omar Khadr

"No one has told Omar, or us, anything about when he can expect to be transferred."
KHADR'S LAWYER JOHN NORRIS

Prehistoric. Bird

▶ This undated graphic illustration released by the University of Otago on Wednesday shows a Kairuku, a giant penguin.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Giant penguin on display

Experts from New Zealand and the United States have reconstructed the fossil skeleton of a giant penguin — from roughly 26 million years ago — for the first time, revealing long wings, a slender build and a spearlike bill that have it being described as one elegant bird.

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Murdoch son steps down

Rupert's youngest resigns chair of News International Will stay on as deputy COO of News Corp.

James Murdoch, the executive at the epicentre of the phone-hacking scandal at his father's British newspapers, is stepping down as executive chairman of News Corp.'s U.K. newspaper arm.

News Corp. said in a statement Wednesday that James, the youngest son of 80-year-old media mogul Rupert Murdoch, has relinquished his position at News International to concentrate on the company's television business.

The 39-year-old will still remain deputy chief operating officer of News Corp., but the move plucks the one-time heir apparent to his father's global empire away from a firestorm over his role in Britain's phone-hacking scandal.

1.6% News Corp. shares set a 52-week high in New York after the news broke, rising 1.6 per cent to $20.11 a share.

"James' resignation was inevitable," said Louis Ureneck, a journalism professor at Boston University. "He either condoned the hacking or was irresponsibly unaware. Neither is acceptable in a top executive of a media company."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manhattan. Demonstration

▶ An Occupy Wall Street protester holds a sign during a march toward New York's Bryant Park.

JOHN MINCHILLO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Occupied once again

There was a heavy police presence around New York's 42nd Street area as the demonstration began Wednesday morning. Protesters marched on the offices of pharmaceutical giant Pfizer.

Navajo Nation sues over trademark

MATT YORK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The native American tribe Navajo Nation has sued Urban Outfitters months after the tribe sent a cease-and-desist letter to the clothing retailer demanding it pull the "Navajo" name from its products. The lawsuit filed late Tuesday in U.S. District Court in New Mexico alleges trademark violations as well as violations of the federal Indian Arts and Crafts Act.

Urban Outfitters set off a firestorm of criticism last year with its line of Navajo-branded clothing and accessories — particularly underwear and a liquor flask.

The company has declined to comment on the suit.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. TUESDAY

TSX	Dollar	Oil	Natural gas	Gold
- 96.46 (12,644.01)	+ 0.60¢ (101.06¢ US)	+ $0.52 US ($107.07 US)	$2.54 US (+ 1.9¢ US)	$1,711.30 US (- $77.10 US)

Apple now worth more than $500 billion

Apple's market capitalization topped $500 billion in opening trading on Wednesday, climbing to a mountain peak where very few companies have ventured — and where none have stayed for very long.

Apple was already the world's most valuable company. The gap between it and No. 2 Exxon Mobil Corp. has widened rapidly in the past month, as investors have digested Apple's report of blow-out holiday-season sales of iPhones and iPads. And, more recently, Apple has raised investors' hopes that it might institute a dividend.

The company's market capitalization climbed near $508 billion as shares rose $8.76, or 1.6 per cent, to $544.17.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greek unions protest reforms

Greece's largest unions held protests and a work stoppage Wednesday as the crisis-hit country's coalition government pressed ahead with wage cuts and other painful austerity measures.

The stoppage disrupted services at tax offices and other public agencies, and a protest was held outside the EU representation building in central Athens.

Greece is in its fifth year of recession and unemployment has roughly doubled since the start of the financial crisis, reaching 21 per cent after more than two years of punishing savings reforms.

"Workers' rights are being lost constantly," said Nicholas Kioutsoukis, a senior member of the GSEE, Greece's largest union. "We need elections, so that the public can express its will on these issues." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada likely to lose social-media lead

Unless an unexpected flood of new users finally decide to join Facebook or learn to tweet, Canada may soon lose its social-media crown.

Last year, Canada had the most social-networking users in the world on a per-capita basis, according to research firm eMarketer.

About 47.4 per cent of Canadians were using social media at least once a month in 2011, compared to 47.2 per cent of Americans, 42.4 per cent of South Koreans and 40.2 per cent of Australians.

Worldwide, social-network users represented about 17.3 per cent of the global population.

But social media is expected to grow a little faster in the U.S. in 2012, which would push Canada down into second place on the list. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Facebook to integrate ads with content

Hopes to attract major brands to tell their 'stories' to targeted users Need to boost value before IPO

Messages from brands such as Walmart and Starbucks may soon be mixed in with your Facebook status updates and baby photos from friends and family.

Facebook unveiled new advertising opportunities Wednesday to help the world's biggest brands spread their messages on the world's largest online social network.

Brands you've endorsed by hitting the "like" button will now be able to push deals and other updates right into the news feeds that show your friends' updates, photos and links. These posts could also show up if one of your friends has interacted with a brand, such as by liking it or commenting on a photo.

The changes come ahead of Facebook's initial public offering of stock, expected this spring. The IPO could value the company at as much as $100 billion. That means Facebook has to prove it can bring in real advertising revenue from the likes of Walmart, Procter & Gamble and other massive brands.

"Facebook ... are not making serious money from major brand advertisers," said Rebecca Lieb, an analyst with the Altimeter Group. "They currently have rather low-rent, shoddy ads on Facebook."

This could now change as Facebook moves to integrate brands' messages into the news feeds of its 845 million users.

Rather than bombarding people with flashy ads, Facebook is urging companies to integrate themselves into what people are already doing on the site — talking to their friends and family, commenting on photos or posting news links. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cautious change

Facebook will collect feedback and test out how its users respond to the changes.

- **At first** users may see just one message a day from a brand inside their news feed.
- **Users** won't see messages from random companies they are not connected to in some way — directly or through a friend.

TOUCHSCREEN

Microsoft shows off Windows 8

Microsoft on Wednesday let consumers start trying out its upcoming touch-based Windows 8 operating system, which aims to power a new wave of computer tablets and traditional PCs designed to counter Apple's big gains in the market through its Macs and iPads.

The test "beta" version of the revamped system was introduced at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, the planet's largest cellphone trade show.

Windows 8 applications are spread across a mosaic of tiles that can be navigated with a finger swipe on the screen or with a keyboard and mouse. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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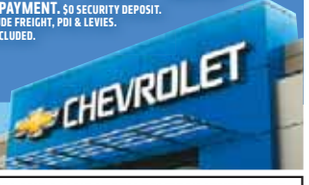

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WHEN IN DOUBT, AD LIB

HE SAYS ...

JOHN MAZEROLLE
METRO

I'm just talking off the top of my head here, but I miss performing improv comedy.

Writing humour is satisfying, sure — especially that special moment when you see your name ~~on a paycheque~~ in a newspaper. But the delayed, distant feedback can make you feel like you have fewer readers than the iTunes service agreement.

In contrast, and as Mitt Romney would tell you, there's no greater thrill than the instant response you receive when you get on stage and make stuff up.

If you're not aware, improvisation is a form of theatre that has spawned many comedic troupes, some serious theatre, certain art-house films and the Iraq war.

Generally, the idea is simply to make things up on the spot, often with an audience suggestion, which in theory can be absolutely anything, but which in practice is always "sex," "horny," "circus," "bus stop" or "spatula."

If that sounds like kids' stuff, rest assured there are some deep lessons to be learned.

"When you accept what the scene gives you and don't try too hard, then everything that happens is 'right,' the possibilities are endless and things naturally fall into place. There's a lesson in there somewhere."

For instance, one of the improv rules you organically discover is "Don't try to be funny." Some would argue I've mastered that.

But the point is that humour should arise from strong characters and a well-told story. When you tell a conventional punchline joke during improv the audience reply is a rising-then-falling "aaAAAaah" sound, which means "Clever. Not funny. But clever. Now be funny."

Another improv life lesson, perhaps the most important one, is to accept what the world gives you.

If another actor turned to you on stage and said, "Hi, Donald Trump!" then your natural, human reaction would be to punch him in the throat. But improv teaches you that scenes work best if you accept every suggestion — so you scowl in a Trumpian manner and wonder what it must be like to know that even a billion dollars isn't enough for a decent hairpiece.

When you accept what the scene gives you and don't try too hard, then everything that happens is "right," the possibilities are endless, and things naturally fall into place. There's a lesson in there somewhere.

Improv is fun, challenging and, yes, can give you a better outlook on life. I think you should try it.

And if you don't have the energy or gumption or whatever excuse you're using not to do it, just remember what an audience member once told me during an introspective moment: "Horny!"

Words to live by.

Read more of John Mazerolle's columns at metronews.ca/hesays

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

The Junos are set for April 1. With William Shatner as host, will you be watching?

60% NO. SOUNDS LIKE AN APRIL FOOL'S JOKE

40% YES. BEAM ME UP!

Local tweets

- **@ryanlannon:** Beautiful girls all over Ottawa U's Campus today #wowza
- **@vijaysappani:** in my pink shirt/tie today. how apt too for today's events with burmese prodemocracy ldrs. #antibullying
- **@Chamika:** I get it now #OCTranspo, the bus times are in Nfld time! I think 1p Ottawa time, you mean 130p. My bad.
- **@joelAstairs:** ONLY $122 TO GET FROM OTTAWA TO WHITEHORSE, YUKON ON THE GREYHOUND! Who wants to travel across Canada with me?
- **@robynbarabash:** This wind makes me wonder if I moved to Lethbridge instead of Ottawa.. #mini-tornado/blizzard
- **@BlueBurlesque:** Where can I get Kevlar in Ottawa? Or do I really need to buy it online? #firebreather #fireeater #fb

Daily Zoom

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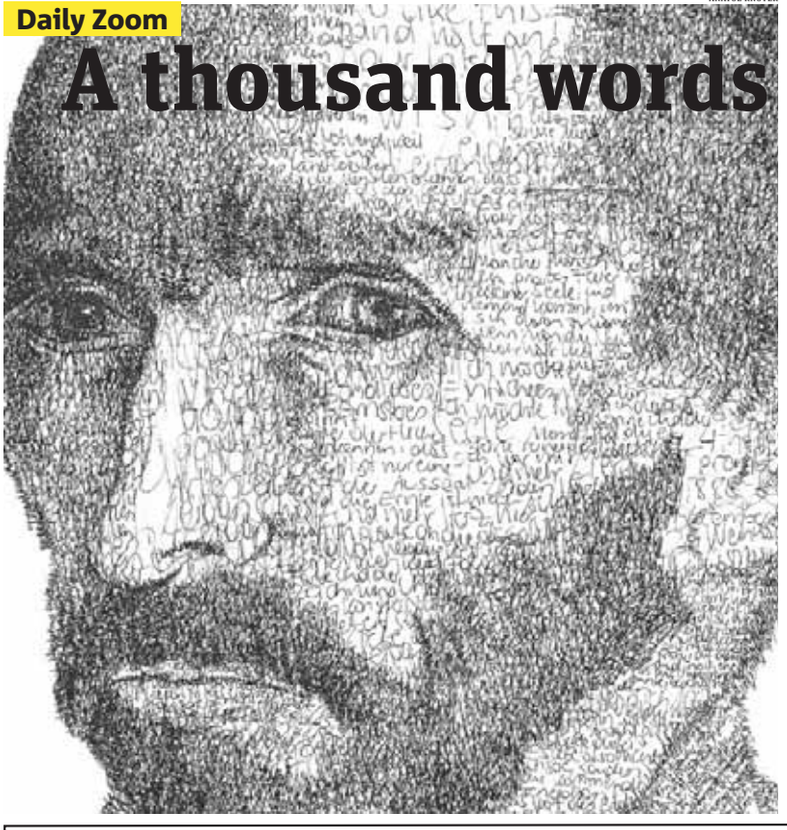

A thousand words

Artist 'writes' famous portraits

PORTRAITURE. This sketch of the great Vincent van Gogh can speak for itself. Artist Anatol Knotek creates faces composed from his own handwriting. Knotek, whose works allude to 1960s avant-garde poetry, has also "written" stunning portraits of Bob Dylan, Pablo Picasso and Nobel Prize laureate Hermann Hesse. MWN

▶ Anatol Knotek

60 seconds

Anatol Knotek, 34, artist from Vienna

What's the idea behind your "handwritten" portraits?
They're meant to blur the borders between poetry and fine art. For me, it's a type of communication, pairing the act of writing and the art of painting. It's "visual poetry."

What do you write?
A mixture of my own writing and words associated with the person I'm drawing. In this portrait, I used some passages taken from van Gogh's letters. I also added some sentences from Theo van Gogh's letter to his mother that reported his famous brother's death.

And how do you write your drawings?
I first make the sketch with a pencil and then I begin the writing process with a permanent felt-tip pen. I use small, simple words for the details, then larger letters for the overall appearance. It can take about two weeks to do one such portrait.

What inspired your work?
Concrete poetry — poetic verses that are arranged in a shape or pattern for added visual effect.

ANTHONY JOHNSTON/MWN

metro
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2 scene

Oprah

Oprah Winfrey is bringing her life lessons north of the border for a TV event sure to rank among her Canadian fans' favourite things.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Musical 'Carrie' becomes the third high-profile re-imagined work in New York this season

Airing of the grievances

For these sibling band mates, honesty is the best policy Catch the Barr Brothers Saturday

BACKSTAGE PASS

JEN TRAPLIN
METRO OTTAWA

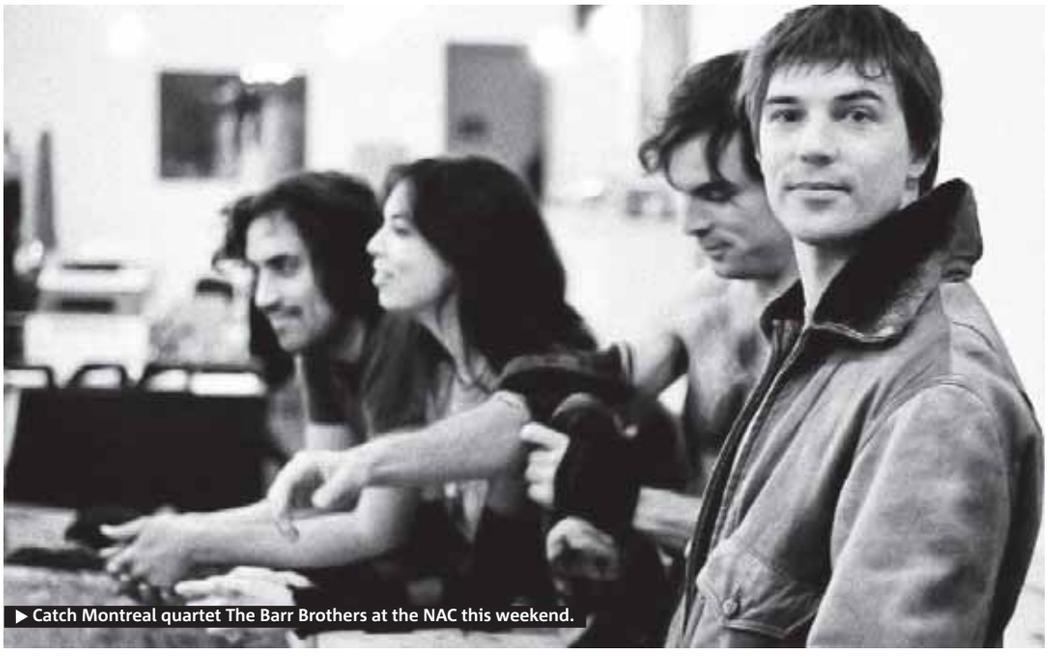
There's is certainly no shortage of stories about sibling spats in rock bands — think Oasis, Kings of Leon, even Tegan and Sara getting into it.

Brad Barr of Montreal-based folk-rock group The Barr Brothers says it even happens with him and his band mate and brother Andrew.

"He's really good at getting under my skin and I'm really good at getting under his, but we're always able to resolve things," says Brad.

"We're pretty well balanced that way."

HANDOUT



Catch Montreal quartet The Barr Brothers at the NAC this weekend.

Details

When is the show?

Event: The Barr Brothers perform in the National Arts Centre's Fourth Stage (53 Elgin St.) on Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $19 through the NAC Box Office.

What it all comes down to, he says, is the brutal honesty that can only be shared between family members.

"The thing about siblings, and what I notice with him, is that we may appear to be fighting or arguing to most people, but we get it out a lot quicker," he explains.

"We can be really honest with each other and whatever the disagreement or the discrepancy is, it's resolved immediately. Nothing lingers. We can be honest and just get it out in the open."

"Either way, we're stuck together," Brad laughs.

True, you can't change the fact that the band mates are genetically linked but it does seem circumstance has played a bigger role in The Barr Brothers' history than just forcing together two siblings.

Sarah Page, the band's harpist, was a neighbour whose music would seep through the walls of Brad and Andrew's apartment in Montreal.

And, one of the band's current managers is a former waitress in a club that caught fire after one of their shows years ago.

"I really believe in allowing the universe to bring things to you and it's up to you to figure out how to use them," he says.

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JACQUELYN MARTIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reese Witherspoon

Reese talks to kids about abuse

Actress Reese Witherspoon has had the talk with her two young children.

Not the sex talk.

The domestic violence talk.

As a Global Ambassador for Avon's efforts to help victims of domestic violence, Witherspoon travelled to the Washington area to speak to the 2nd World Conference of Women's Shelters, prompting a talk with Ava, 12, and Deacon, 8.

Though her kids were shocked to hear how one in three women is abused in this country, Witherspoon said it was important for them to be aware of the problem especially her daughter who's almost old enough date.

At a time when bullies are responding with violence, Witherspoon also says parents must educate themselves and their children about social media and "what constitutes harassment, what is acceptable and what is not."

Witherspoon says talking publicly "creates empowerment" among women and helps them feel they're not alone.

She said it often gives them the courage to go to a shelter or take legal action that could save their lives.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Lindsay Lohan

‘I will not let anyone down’

Lindsay Lohan is mounting her comeback, starting with a stint hosting Saturday Night Live this week, and she knows there’s a lot at stake.

“I will not let anyone down, especially myself,” she says in an interview with the Today Show, starkly contrasting her last visit to the show, during which she denied having any problems at all.

“I wasn’t as comfortable with myself then. I think it was a fear factor that I had about what was really going on. And, you know, I had to get that wake-up call.”

METRO

Snooki pregnant?

MTV went into crisis mode after hearing news: Source

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

Though she recently denied it, many news organizations are now reporting that Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi is indeed three months pregnant with boyfriend Jionni LaValle’s baby.

The Jersey Shore star is reportedly looking to make the most of the announcement — and has even brokered a deal for a cover story with Us Weekly.

Apparently, Snooki is looking to use her pregnancy to become “the next Kourtney Kardashian,” a source tells Page Six.

▶ Snooki

But reps at MTV aren’t as excited, since Snooki is currently filming a Jersey Shore spin-off chronicling her hard-partying lifestyle.

“MTV went into crisis mode after they found out,” the source says. “They’re trying to hide it because it would greatly affect the creative direction of the show.”

At first, I laughed at this because, well, “creative direction” and Jersey Shore spin-off do not go together.

But then it makes sense: MTV’s programming is filled with a million bad parenting reality shows, from Teen Mom to 16 and Pregnant. Even they probably loathe to air a segment of Snooki taking her baby for its first spray tan.

Ben and Jen welcome third child

Jennifer Garner gave birth to a son Tuesday in Santa Monica, Calif., according to People magazine. It’s the third child and first boy for Garner and husband Ben Affleck, who also have daughters Violet, 6, and Seraphina, 3.

▶ Affleck and Garner

Garner previously said that they knew the gender of the baby ahead of time but weren’t sharing that information.

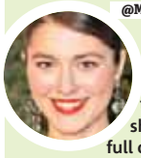
“It would be so weird to have a boy,” she told Ellen DeGeneres during an interview last year.

METRO

Celebrity tweets

@davidwain

Favor for me: if you liked Wanderlust, please email 100 friends and tell them to go see it. As thanks I’ll send you a Blue 2009 Honda Civic.


@M_E_Winstead

I just cut my hand with texturizing shears and full on passed out. Great way to start the day!

@hwinkler4real

YES we are a little behind in the Winkler household but ...BREAKING BAD..HAS OVER TAKEN ME now that’s tv

@Joan_Rivers

Both Jennifer Lopez and I have experienced nipple slips at the Oscars. The only difference is that mine was peeking out of an open-toe shoe.

Who will play Whitney in film?

Plans are reportedly already underway for a movie about Whitney Houston’s life, according to the Daily Mail.

Producer Clive Davis is behind the project, and while Jennifer Hudson, Vivica Fox and Jordin Sparks are reportedly on the list for the lead role, Davis is said to have his eye on Rihanna to play Houston.

And lest it seems like Davis is trying to cash in on his friend’s death, the film was reportedly already being developed before Houston passed away last month.

▶ Whitney Houston

“Whitney knew about the project and was excited to see where it would lead,” a source says.

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3 life

Star power

GETTY IMAGES

It was announced this week that Sir Elton John will be headlining Fashion Cares, the silver anniversary fundraising gala, to be held on September 9, 2012 at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts in Toronto.

Chaired by Michael King and David Furnish, with cosmetics powerhouse MAC Viva Glam returning as title sponsor, the event will feature an intimate dinner, a retrospective of the past 25 years of Fashion Cares, and a live show performance by Sir Elton John and other high profile, international musicians.

METRO

Guy Laroche designer shows gem-inspired collection, and no skin, in Paris.

Peter Philips, global creative director of Chanel makeup, creates nail and lip colours that instantly sell out and spark wait lists Heed his advice for a natural, beautiful look

You too can nail Chanel chic

ROMINA MCGUINNESS
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN LONDON

WILLY WANDERPERRE

Peter Philips

The mouth vs. the eyes

"Being beautiful is as tough as you want to make it, but it doesn't have to be all about the pressure. There's no such thing as an ideal face. Who can measure that? A perfect face is one that expresses confidence and is happy with itself. When I speak to somebody I'm always drawn to their mouth, maybe that's because it's more comfortable than looking someone in the eyes. Also with the eyes, which eye do you look at? But all women should have an eyelash curler. This also applies to women who don't wear makeup. One pinch to the lashes can work miracles as it opens up your eyes and makes you look fresh and awake. Add some mascara and you're ready to go."

The face: The fine balance

"It's a criminal offence to wear too much makeup, just as it is to wear too little. It's all about striking a balance and wearing a look with confidence. Something that always looks wrong is not blending your foundation in properly so that you can see the line between the face and the neck. It's so easy to avoid. Blend it out with your fingers or check the lighting in your bathroom."

"It's a criminal offence to wear too much makeup, just as it is to wear too little makeup. It's all about striking a balance and wearing a look with confidence."
PETER PHILIPS

Don't forget the inside

"Every phase of your life has beauty in it. We all want youth but at some point we have to realize that we're getting older and it's not all about foundation or mascara. If you eat and live wrong it will have an impact on your looks. You know the tricks: eat more vegetables, stop smoking, drink water and cut back on alcohol."

The nails: introducing April, May and June.

"The Le Vernis shades are anticipated not because of me but because they're Chanel. I have the advantage that I can link my creations with the fashion show, it gives them a reason to exist. May is pinky and girly and June has a beachy feel to it. It took 24 try-outs in the lab before we got the right shade for Le Vernis in June.

What's trending?

Trends, no. Seduction, yes.

"I don't create trends; it's the women who wear them that create them. My challenge is to develop shades that will seduce these women into buying them and the only way to seduce a women is by literally seducing her. I chose spring horizons; sunset and sunrise as it can be the most amazing moment of the day. I was afraid it would be a bit kitschy, mellow and corny, but it's also very beautiful. She can't be intimidated by the colours or feel like she's being forced into wearing something. She needs to stand in front of the counter or be reading a magazine and say, 'that's a shade I want to wear.'"

Jeanne Space

In this hectic modern world, Twitter has become a cool and succinct way of communicating. It allows me to be accessible, instantly speak my mind, and connects me with all kinds of people. Whether it's a fashion question or you just want to comment on life's bigger picture, I'd love to hear from you.

@Jeanne_Beker: 8 days of shows to cover in Paris. A fantasy for some... A lot of work for me! But not complaining. What's YOUR ultimate Paris fantasy?

- @sarahohm: "Audrey Hepburn in Funny Face" would be mine! #parisfantasy
- @Jeanne_Beker: Oh yeah! To be a hot young model falling in love with a cool photographer... What a gorgeous cliche!
- @Enriquemylove16: live there go to champs elysees every weekend for shopping :P get to know people from there explore the fashion world #dream♥
- @Mymsie7: wow! I want to get to visit every beautiful spot in the city! And taste everything there is to taste! I want to go next year:)
- @KendalLo: Hands down Paris at Christmas & NYE. Long meals inside warm Parisian restaurants, lots of wine, good coffee and shopping.
- @Jeanne_Beker: Oh YEAH! Nothing like guilt-free gorging in the City of Light! Worth every calorie!!!

View from mon petit chambre. Always stay in same charming St. Germain hotel in same sweet room: Home.

TUNE INTO FASHION TELEVISION EVERY SUNDAY AT 5:30 P.M. (ET) ON CTV. JEANNE BEKER'S FINDING MYSELF IN FASHION (PENGUIN) IS AVAILABLE IN BOOKSTORES NATIONWIDE.

DESIGN CENTRE

Lose that 'bowling alley' look

Home decor guru Karl Lohnes tackles a reader's living room design dilemma

KARL LOHNES
HOME@METRONEWS.CA

I recently moved into a new place and bought two open-style sofas for the living room to create a cosy but formal look. Now the room looks like a bowling alley. What can I do to fix this?
Tamara McCarthur, Toronto

CB2's Acrylic Tripod Easel, $199

Creating a symmetrical look with furnishings is an easy way to add a formal touch to any room. In your case, the positioning of the two couches guide the eye directly to the plain windows at the end of the room, creating the bowling alley effect.

With no options of rearranging the sofas, try to find ways to divert the eye from going all the way to the end of the room. You can do this by adding a few interesting and useful accessories that make the eye go from side to side rather than to the end of the room. Here are a few suggestions:

Layered rugs not only look cool but can allow you to use a favourite too-small rug by laying a larger one underneath. A large horizontal striped 8-by-10-foot rug will help draw the eye across the room and make it look wider than it is. Now the room will have a size-appropriate rug while still incorporating your cool but smallish hidden rug.

One heavy wall of coloured art will quickly draw the eye to one side of the room rather than immediately to the end of the room. I suggest hanging the large print to the left of the room, then adding many small art pieces opposite to keep both walls filled. Other red accents, such as glass vases, candles and throws, will help add a bit more colour into the room.

Place something airy in the corner to round out the room. A whimsical tall plant, étagère or art easel will help. When you fill in the corners of a room you'll then help shorten the space into a better proportion.

Consider an art easel holding a tiny, bright-coloured painting or becoming the stand for a plasma television... different, interesting and unique!

A not too heavy looking display or serving table in front of the window to display flowers, framed photos or use for serving when guests visit will anchor the end of the room by saying 'look at me first.'

The one you have looks a bit dark, heavy and plain. Painting it in a pale grey finish and topping it with glass will give it an airy look.

Got a design dilemma? Email your question and a photo to: home@metronews.ca. For daily design advice, follow @KarlLohnes on Twitter.

CONTRIBUTED

▶ This living room looks long and narrow. A few style tricks will help draw the eye to the sides of the room.

WEST ELM

▶ West Elm's 8x10 Zigzag Rug ($530)

John-Richard's Clipper Table, $789, homesav.com

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CHARLES THE BUTLER

ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER@METRONEWS.CA

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ISTOCK

▶ Stop collecting finger marks on your stainless steel items.

Dear Charles the butler,
Can you please advise on the best way to remove finger marks from stainless steel appliances?
Thank you,
Kim

Dear Kim,

As beautiful as stainless steel is, those finger marks drive me nuts too!

Fingerprints tend to be oil-based, although they can be caused by many other things. But natural oil from the skin on our fingers is the most common culprit.

So remember, "like removes like." These are the methods in the order I like to follow and the ones in which I have had the most success:

1. A microfibre cloth and "all-purpose cleaner" (4 cups water & 1 tablespoon dish soap)
2. A microfibre cloth and "multi-purpose cleaner" (50% water & 50% vinegar)
3. Paper towel and olive oil; I learned this trick from a stainless steel installer and it does work!
4. You can buy a commercial stainless steel cleaning product at most hardware stores

Remember to wipe the entire surface. If you only spot wipe the handle and surrounding area, you will eventually get a mark or discolouration from where you always wipe.

HAVE A QUESTION? SEND A MESSAGE TO ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER@METRONEWS.CA

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CHASE

Pastels: Back in vogue

For a time, pastels had faded into obscurity Now the unassuming colour palette is seeing a gentle resurgence Put away your memories of Miami Vice and give the trend a second look

RICHARD PECKETT
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA
METRO WORLD NEWS IN LONDON

The mention of pastels is enough to make some people cringe, especially men. It's a colour palette for which Queen Elizabeth II shows a fondness. But it's seeing a fashionable return — quite literally, have a look at the spring/summer '12 runways. Not to mention blogs and interior magazines.

The interior designer Sophie Paterson and author of Style and Glamour puts it down to people being "fed up with totally neutral colour schemes. Whilst anyone can throw a taupe scheme at a room, it takes a bit more skill to pull off a scheme using colour accents." Not to mention, "pastel colors are very calming and uplifting,"

Urban pastels

Pastels can read bucolic and that's not usually a favoured look amongst, savvy urban dwellers. Paterson suggests using, "soft feminine colours as a contrast with clean line furniture, particularly dark pieces such as grey-stained oak."

Avoid looking dull

"You need to use a variety of textures: velvet, silk, linen and wool all work well in juxtaposition. For example shiny against flat," explains the London-based interior designer. She continues, "I like to start with a neutral base (sofa, wall and floor) and build up the layers using colours and accessories to add depth and interest."

Accents and accessories

Rather than turning your space into a pastel chalkboard, you may prefer to give a nod to the trend with artfully selected accessories. Paterson says, "Ceramic vases work wonderfully in pastels. Abstract oil paintings with a touch of pastel in the paint colours, or even rustic linen cushions with a shot of pastel velvet are particularly sophisticated."

Spring thinking

Do more than just spring-clean and reinvigorate your apartment with a dash of colour because as the expert enthuses, "Pastels are particularly relevant for the spring season. I'm loving dusty pastel green. It represents the beginning of new growth and freshness, which feels so right after the long grey winter."

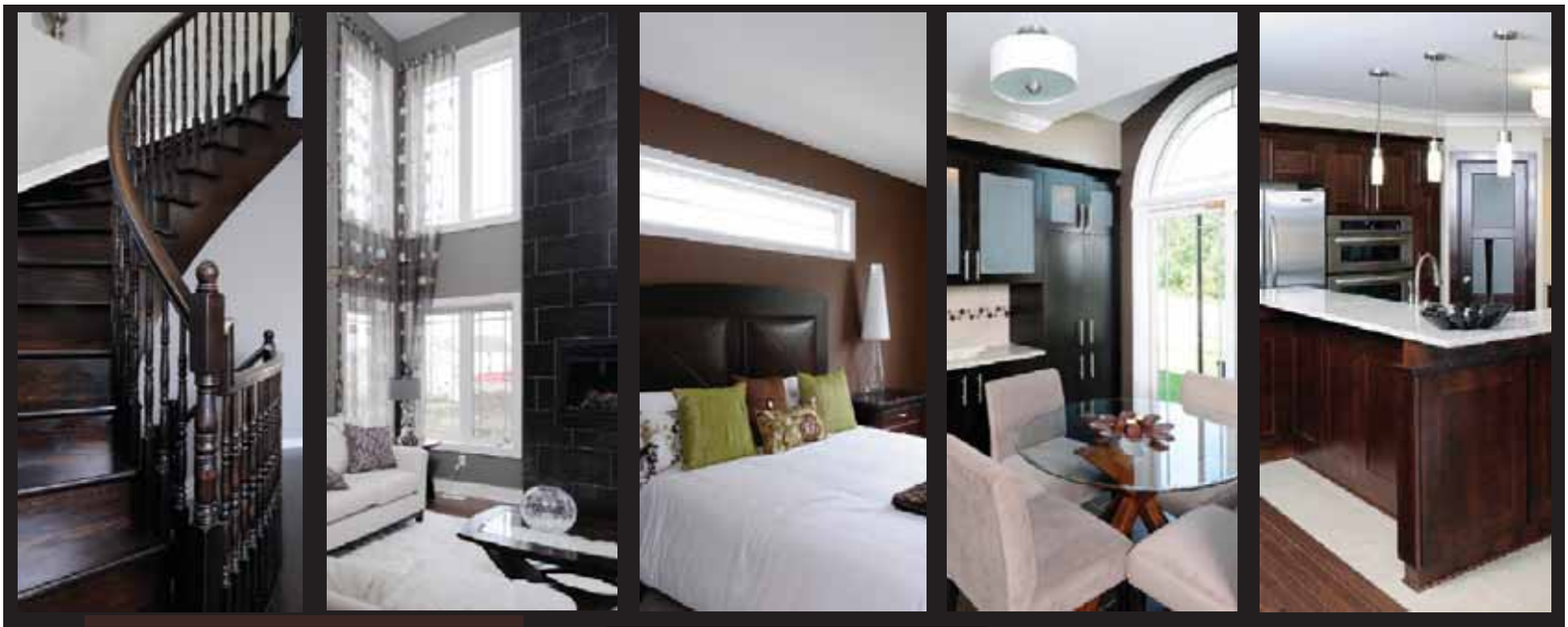
CONTRIBUTED

▶ This is a man's bedroom. Deal with it.

2 PIECES WITH PASTEL

ANTHROPOLOGIE
Amorphous nesting table set
$898, anthropolgie.com

STELTON — ARNE JACOBSEN
AddColour Bright Press Coffee Maker Ltd Ed
$341, panik-design.com



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Set the stage for the sale

Believe it or not, fake furniture and pretty flowers may get you a better asking price for your condoninium

Thinking of selling your condo? Staging adds sizzle to your unit and showcases your rooms in the best possible light for potential buyers.

A small investment in a properly staged condo can result in offers well above your asking price. For example, the Manitoba Real Estate Staging Association found that staged homes sold over list 68 per cent of the time.

Condo staging will help sell your condo faster because the longer it stays on the market, the further the price declines.

So what is staging? Buyers need to be able to imagine themselves living in your condo, which is hard to visualize in a big, empty space. Every good realtor knows that staging is a powerful tool that transforms your unit into a model suite that buyers want to see. And big, colourful photos of beautifully staged rooms will really stand out in your online listings and will drive traffic to your opening.

It pays to get expert advice as most condo sellers may not be able to view their units objectively. The pros know all the little tricks that help to sell, like the use of battery-operated, scented candles instead of real ones.

Greenery, florals, and candles can also be artistically placed throughout the rooms. And make your own draperies with inexpensive fabric and hemmed with fusible hem tape — no sewing required.

Donna Ragona is a certified trusted staging authority with Suite Design in Oakville. "If you do only one thing, make sure you clean, clean, clean," she says.

So what to do with an empty condo when you've got no furnishings available? An innovative and popular trend is emerging in the condo staging realm: funky fake furniture.

"The real furniture, that is still offered, but we also offer now the knockdown cardboard furniture as a different option. I'll offer it as a service. My team will set up the furniture and do the full staging," says Ragona.

These faux-furnishings are indistinguishable from the real thing and can stand up to 1,000 pounds of weight. They are collapsible and can fit in the back of your car. Ragona explains, "the boxes are the base,
and then they have slip covers. There's different colours and then the accessorizing is something separate, so any pillows and throws, that we do on our own. The beds come with the headboard and the bed skirts and we add any bedding."

DUNCAN MCALLISTER

Condo staging tips

- **Walk through** your property with a friend and scrutinize every room from a buyer's perspective.
- **Make it bright,** turn on all the lights, even during the day, and open all curtains and blinds. Clean all your windows, inside and out.
- **Welcome potential buyers** with bright and cheerful planters filled with plants and flowers .
- **Use scents and candles** to create an inviting smell in your rooms.

COURTESY DONNA RAGONA AT SUITE DESIGN.

▶ Cardboard furniture can help buyers picture themselves living in your unit.

COURTESY DONNA RAGONA AT SUITE DESIGN.

▶ Make your condo bright and inviting.

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Satisfy your raw curiosity

March is Nutrition Month across Canada ◗ Celebrate eating healthy by trying to 'uncook' raw foods in your own kitchen ◗ This Super Carrot Soup is tasty and easy to prepare

Super Carrot Soup

THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

▶ This recipe makes 500 ml (2 cups).

Preparation:

1. In blender, combine carrots, water, oil, cilantro, garlic, raisins, lemon juice, salt, curry powder, cumin and cayenne. Blend until smooth.
2. Topping: Sprinkle each bowl with cilantro and raisins before serving. UNCOOKING WITH RAWROSE BY ROSE VASILE/ THE CANADIAN PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS (PROFESSIONAL ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF (FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA)

Variation

Avocado
Avocado can be used instead of olive oil. After blending other ingredients, blend half an avocado and 50 ml (1/4 cup) water until smooth.

Ingredients:

- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) coarsely chopped carrots
- 250 ml (1 cup) water
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) cilantro
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tsp raisins
- 5 ml (1 tsp) lemon juice
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) sea salt
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) curry powder
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) ground cumin
- Pinch cayenne 5 ml

Topping:

- 15 ml (1 tbsp) chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- 5 ml (1 tsp) raisins

Weekly Cookbook

Certified raw foods chef Rose Vasile, has released the fifth edition of her Uncooking with RawRose cookbook ($29.95).

The recipes are surprisingly varied and include a large section on soups, salad dressing and dips and another on desserts, often using nuts or seeds as the base for cakes or pies.

One standout recipe is a lasagna made with layers of mushrooms, zucchini and spinach, almond cheese and marinara sauce.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Just because you're eating healthy, doesn't mean you shouldn't save room for dessert ◗ Try Banana Lemon Pie

Preparation:

1. In food processor, process lnuts. Add raisins and process until mixt starts to clump together.
2. Gently distribute mix over bottom of a 23-cm (9-inch) plate, then press the mixture firmly to form crust.
3. Grate lemon zest on top of the crust.
4. Juice lemons into bowl. Slice bananas into lemon juice; stir to coat bananas with juice. Arrange banana , juice on crust.
5. Decorate with poppy seeds, blueberries, raspberries, slices of colourful fruit.

UNCOOKING WITH RAWROSE BY ROSE VASILE/ THE CANADIAN PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS

Ingredients:

- 750 ml (3 cups) pecans or walnuts (not soaked)
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) raisins
- Zest and juice from 1 1/2 medium lemons
- 4 medium bananas
- Poppy seeds, blueberries, raspberries, slices of colourful fruit or sprigs of mint

Banana Lemon Pie

THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

▶ This recipe makes one 23-cm (9-inch) pie.

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SPECIAL INFORMATION FEATURE

Happy Beer Day!

No, not in Canada, but Iceland ◗ Take time to celebrate with a pint of Lava Smoked Imperial Stout

JEFF O'REILLY
FOR METRO

While looking for new and unusual products at the LCBO, I spotted an interesting looking bottle with a volcano on it … a beer from Iceland. Iceland?

I have never had a beer from Iceland, so I have to try it. And then I get to thinking, what do I even know about Iceland?

Jules Verne took us on A Journey To The Center Of The Earth through here. The mesmerizing mysteriously ethereal music of Sigur Rós. The eccentric brilliance of the Sugar Cubes and their wonderfully weird singer Björk. Those super cool fuzzy wool sweaters. Turn right at Greenland. And, oh yes, that volcano (Eyjafjallajökull) erupted and disrupted air traffic a few years back.

Surely there has to be more to it than that, and what I found in my research has me pining for their fjords.

Iceland was recently named the world's best travel destination by National Geographic's Traveler Magazine, The Sunday Times and Lonely Planet for good reason. With active geysers and volcanoes, the landscape is still changing with breathtakingly beautiful waterfalls, glaciers, the northern lights and geothermal pools as part of an unspoiled, naturally stunning backdrop for a cutting-edge arts, cultural and festival scene. Old world beauty and heritage plays off bustling world-class nightlife in the capital city of Reykjavík … and if that wasn't enough — they have Beer Day!

Prohibition went into effect in 1915 in Iceland, and while wines and spirits somehow snuck back over the years, you couldn't get a decent pint of beer with more than 2.5 per cent alcohol until beer was once again legalized on March 1, 1989 — causing many to celebrate Beer Day. Beer Day, I like the sound of that — Canada needs one of those for sure.

In 2007, the Ölvisholt farm, a 1,000-year-old sheep and dairy farm on some of the most fertile lands on the island, turned into the Ölvisholt Brugghús (brewery) and they haven't looked back since — proving a point I have known for ages and taking a tongue-in-cheek poke at a popular Icelandic saying "Mjólk er góð. Bjór er betri." (Milk is good. Beer is better.)

Lava Smoked Imperial Stout (9.4 per cent alcohol by volume, 500 ml LCBO $5.80) pours jet black with a thick, frothy chocolate milkshake-like head that leaves as quickly as it arrived. Delicious, roasted dark, bready chocolate malt aromas with smoky undertones fill the nose.

The first sips reveal rich, roasted coffee, grains, dry chocolate and black licorice before the woody smokiness playfully wraps around your tongue and lingers until the end. It has a creamy, full-bodied mouth feel and a nice, pleasing alcohol warming feeling.

Very impressive indeed.

'Gateway to Hell'

▶ **The Hekla volcano** (on the Lava bottle label) can be seen from the Ölvisholt brewery and was known in the Middle Ages to Europeans as "The Gateway to Hell." It hasn't been active since 2000.

JEFF O'REILLY/FOR METRO

▶ Sarah poses with a pint of Lava and a beer in an Icelandic sweater cosy, a treat from her sister Louise, who lives in the village of Selfoss, Iceland, not far from the Ölvisholt brewery.

Try these budget-friendly wines from France, Chile

SUSAN DESJARDINS
FOR METRO

Savour signature varietals of France in the March 3 LCBO Vintages release — spicy Alsatian Gewurztraminer, fine Syrah of Crozes-Hermitage, Cab/Merlot-based Bordeaux blends, or powerful Grenache-driven blends of southern France.

Don't miss the Chilean Carmenère feature from the iconic Montes Purple Angel to Emiliana's organic Natura.

Marimar Estate 'La Masia Don Miguel Vineyard' Chardonnay 2007, California
(LCBO #270090, $19.95)
▶ Round, creamy yet juicy and fresh white wine — loaded with flavourful personality.

Yalumba 'The Y Series' Viognier 2011, Australia
(LCBO #624502, $15.95)
▶ A unique white wine that is weighty, fruity and floral.

Perrin & Fils 'Les Christins' Vacqueyras 2009, France
(LCBO #973453, $23.95)
▶ Grenache and Syrah expertly blended, delivering a full-bodied complex red wine that can be aged.

Misiones de Rengo 'Gran Reserva Cuvée' Carmenère 2010, Chile
(LCBO #264937, $19.95)
▶ A Chilean signature red wine — dry, red fruit with smooth texture. Delicious.

Umani Ronchi 'San Lorenzo' Rosso Conero 2008, Italy
(LCBO #981191, $14.95)
▶ Earthy notes, dark berry fruit, traces of black licorice grace this 100 per cent Montepulciano — a great value Italian red wine.

GRAND TOTAL: $94.75

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SAMANTHA EVERTS/FOR METRO

▶ Mushroom quesadillas with house-made guacamole and refried beans at Los Tacos de Mauro.

Visit a downtown oasis

Los Tacos de Mauro serves authentic Mexican fare in a discotheque

SAMANTHA EVERTS
FOR METRO

Tired of your typical shawarma lunch fix? How about authentic Mexican tacos in a discotheque?

It may sound kitschy but Los Tacos de Mauro has become a downtown oasis. Boasting homemade nachos and fajita shells, the restaurant has changed to a casual Mexican food joint from an indie dance club.

Cross the dance floor for possibly the greatest view of the Byward Market. With giant margaritas to sip, it's not difficult to enjoy. The quesadilla platters are offered with lamb, pork or beef. Soft-shell fajitas are house-made and lightly folded over to be filled with either lamb, chicken or mushrooms, which take on a beefy texture with the melted cheese.

"Boasting homemade nachos and fajita shells, the restaurant has changed to a casual Mexican food joint from an indie dance club."

Similarly for the tacos (lamb, pork or beef), each of these platters is served with small pots of diced onions, cilantro, lime wedges, red salsa, and a green creamy jalapeño sauce that you can add to enhance the taste.

The mains are more than worth diving into, but are meat-heavy and there was no refreshing salad or rice served alongside. Be sure to ask for the daily specials so you don't miss out on a sinfully spicy mole lamb dish. There are limited vegetarian options, but the chef can make up a veg-friendly dish if you ask.

The guacamole lime kick was puréed instead of thick. The refried beans weren't at the expected spice level initially, but helped with the spicy Verde sauce and hot red chili sauce.

With all dishes about $10, the traditional tres leche cake (three-milk white cake) was heavenly decadent drizzled with a strawberry sauce.

This is authentic Mexican, but watch out because Saturday Night Fever hits after 7 p.m. so you will have to enjoy your tacos by disco light. Cash only.

Los Tacos de Mauro is located at 349 Dalhousie St.

Doggone good place to stop

SAMANTHA EVERTS
FOR METRO

SAMANTHA EVERTS/FOR METRO

▶ Wag owner Joan Garvey gives Aristotle, a two-year-old poodle, one of his favourite treats.

It's gone dog wild!

Proudly serving pooches in the Glebe for the last six years, Wag is a posh spot for spoiled pets, as its sign says.

What the sign doesn't say is that it's actually the perfect place for dog owners to enjoy a cup of coffee, cherry blossom latte, or caramel apple cider as their dogs socialize and contemplate their perfect puppy-dog beg for some of the delicious treats owners Joan Garvey and Lyne Burton sell.

Their custom blend of Kicking Horse coffee, "Bad Dog" is locally roasted twice a week. It is very flavourful and dark but has more than show dogs jumping for joy in the morning.

"It's very popular," says Garvey, but adds that "Neutered Dog" decaf is a hit, too.

"People love that when they come in they automatically have something in common with the person next to them. It's a whole culture and I see people sit next to each other and just chatting away."

Wag has a wide selection of herbal teas as well.

There are many cute French-café style tables with "canine-hitches" nearby. Because of health regulations they are not allowed to serve people food, but for the four-legged folks, they can get an organic birthday cake with oats, fruit and veggies.

"A lot of dogs have particular tastes," says Garvey. "Some love liver and others salmon flavours."

Other options include apple-bacon, pumpkin-mango or hearty bull wrinkles.

The display at the cashier offers regionally made biscuits from Wagmores that uses whole eggs, whole wheat, and 100 per cent beef cutely decorated as hotdogs, doughnuts or even paw prints.

"The customers tell me that their dogs know blocks away that they're in for a treat."

But fear not, all dogs are leashed in-store and they have never had any problems.

"We just ask that they are well-behaved."

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Time to spring forward

SEASONAL SIPS

Daylight Time Begins March 11:
This first hint of spring means a little bit of extra time after work before darkness falls.

Enjoy the light with a white wine as fresh, crisp, and bursting with life as spring itself. Pascal Jolivet Sancerre ($24.95 +264945) is from the Loire Valley in France, the original home of the Sauvignon Blanc grape. Jolivet is renowned for its versions of the grape, both from Sancerre and from Pouilly-Fume, across the river. Available at Vintages Saturday.

International Women's Day, March 8:
More and more female winemakers are throwing their hats into the ring and they are well-represented in the Canadian wine industry.

Brooke Blair is Aussie-born and educated, but calls the Okanagan Valley her home now, where she is in charge of red winemaking for Jackson-Triggs Okanagan.

This month, try her Jackson-Triggs Sunrock Vineyard Shiraz ($26.95 +271031) with its pleasing combo of black fruit and earthiness. Available at Vintages Saturday.

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4 sports

Soccer. Match

▶ Micah Richards of England, third from right, plays the ball against the Netherlands on Wednesday.

DAVID ROGERS/GETTY IMAGES

Netherlands edges England in friendly

Arjen Robben scored in stoppage time to give the Netherlands a 3-2 friendly victory over England on Wednesday, ending a three-match winless run for the 2010 World Cup finalist exactly 100 days before the European Championship. After setbacks in October and November, this victory puts the Netherlands back on the right track going into more Euro 2012 warmup matches in May. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

‘Something we badly needed’

Canada falls 3-1 to 41st-ranked Armenia in men’s soccer friendly played in Cyprus

Canada started brightly but eventually paid the price for some slack play as Brazilian-born Marcos Pizzelli scored twice to give Armenia a 3-1 win in a soccer friendly Wednesday.

Captain Kevin McKenna gave Canada a fifth-minute lead at Tsirio Stadium but the Armenians took control as the game wore on and had far more scoring chances.

Armenia is ranked 41st in the world, compared to No. 71 for Canada.

“We still have a lot of work to do but I’m really happy we played this game because the quality of the opposition, the way they played, the speed at which they played at was fast,” coach Stephen Hart said. “Something we badly needed. We looked like a team that has not played in four months.”

The Canadians came into the match riding a seven-game unbeaten string. Their last loss was 2-0 to the U.S. in Detroit in June 2011.

“We started out quite well and I think we got a bit optimistic there. They were a lot better team than I personally thought,” admitted forward Iain Hume, who came on as a second-half substitute. “I think 3-1 was a fair score.”

McKenna opened the scoring by taking advantage of some poor Armenia marking on a corner. A defender was late to notice McKenna, who rose and headed in the Julian de Guzman delivery past veteran goalkeeper Roman Berezovsky.

It was the 11th goal for Canada by the 32-year-old defender from Calgary, who has seen action as a forward in the past.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

“I told him he needs to have longer hair. When I think of Giancarlo, I think of someone with long, flowing hair, like Fabio. But if he keeps hitting homers, I’ll call him whatever he wants me to call him.”

MARLINS CATCHER JOHN BUCK, ON HIS TEAMMATE FORMERLY KNOWN AS MIKE STANTON, ABOVE. STANTON, WHOSE FULL NAME IS GIANCARLO CRUZ MICHAEL STANTON, HAS DECIDED TO USE THE NAME GIANCARLO, WHICH HE DROPPED IN THE FIFTH GRADE BECAUSE NO ONE COULD PRONOUNCE IT PROPERLY (IT’S (PRONOUNCED JEE’-AHN-CAHR-LOH).

Woods’ agent slams book by former swing coach

Tiger Woods’ agent lashed out Tuesday against Hank Haney’s book, saying his “armchair psychology” about Woods was “ridiculous” and that it was clear the former swing coach only cares about self-promotion.

Haney’s book about his six years as Woods’ coach is titled The Big Miss. It is to go on sale March 27.

Golf Digest began releasing small excerpts Tuesday on its tablet applications and on its website. Haney’s book was written with help from Jaime Diaz, a senior writer at the magazine who has covered Woods more extensively than anyone over the years.

In one of the excerpts, Haney, a McKinney, Texas, golf guru, said his job became more difficult in 2007, when Woods had 12 majors and was getting closer to the record 18 won by Jack Nicklaus.

“There was more urgency and less fun.... He never mentioned Nicklaus’ record, but it started to weigh more heavily at every major,” the excerpt said. “And Tiger’s actions indicated he believed he had less time to do it than everyone thought.”

He also said Woods was seriously considering becoming a Navy SEAL.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NFL

Steelers will drop Ward

Hines Ward’s constant, ear-to-ear smile tucked behind a black face mask has been a lasting image for Pittsburgh Steelers fans the past 14 seasons.

They won’t see it again.

At least, not in a black-and-gold uniform.

The franchise’s all-time leader in just about every meaningful receiving category will be released sometime in the next two weeks, said president Art Rooney II on the team’s website on Wednesday.

A four-time Pro Bowl selection and MVP of the 2006 Super Bowl, Ward will finish his Steelers career with 1,000 catches, 12,083 yards and 85 receiving touchdowns. He helped Pittsburgh to three AFC championships and a pair of Super Bowl wins.

Ward vowed to return for a 15th season next fall. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-NY Rangers	61	40	15	1	5	169	124	86	21-7-0-2	19-8-1-3	7-2-0-1	W2
d-Boston	61	37	21	1	2	200	140	77	18-11-1-1	19-10-0-1	4-5-0-1	L1
d-Florida	62	30	20	5	7	158	172	72	15-8-1-7	15-12-4-0	6-3-0-1	W3
Pittsburgh	62	36	21	2	3	198	163	77	20-8-2-0	16-13-0-3	6-3-0-1	W3
Ottawa	65	34	23	6	2	199	192	76	17-12-2-1	17-11-4-1	7-2-1-0	W2
Philadelphia	62	34	21	2	5	203	188	75	14-10-1-4	20-11-1-1	4-5-0-1	L1
New Jersey	62	35	23	1	3	172	170	74	16-12-0-3	19-11-1-0	5-4-0-1	L3
Washington	63	32	26	2	3	172	178	69	21-8-0-2	11-18-2-1	4-5-0-1	W3
Winnipeg	65	30	27	4	4	166	186	68	19-10-1-3	11-17-3-1	5-3-1-1	L2
Toronto	63	29	27	4	3	187	195	65	16-12-3-2	13-15-1-1	1-8-1-0	L5
Tampa Bay	63	29	28	3	3	176	213	64	19-9-1-1	10-19-2-2	6-4-0-0	W1
Buffalo	62	27	27	4	4	154	180	62	16-11-3-4	11-16-1-0	5-3-1-1	L1
NY Islanders	63	26	28	6	3	147	182	61	14-14-5-0	12-14-2-2	4-5-1-0	L2
Carolina	63	24	26	7	6	166	190	61	17-12-0-5	7-14-7-1	5-1-2-2	W1
Montreal	64	24	30	2	8	164	177	58	11-14-2-6	13-16-0-2	3-6-0-1	L5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-Vancouver	64	40	16	1	7	204	156	88	18-6-0-4	22-10-1-2	6-1-1-2	L2
d-Detroit	64	42	19	1	2	202	151	87	26-3-1-1	16-16-0-1	7-2-0-1	W1
d-Phoenix	63	33	21	3	6	166	156	75	17-10-2-2	16-11-1-4	9-0-0-1	W6
St. Louis	63	39	17	1	6	161	126	85	26-4-1-3	13-13-0-3	7-3-0-0	W3
Nashville	64	37	20	3	4	181	165	81	21-7-2-3	16-13-1-1	5-3-0-2	L1
Chicago	64	33	24	4	3	193	189	73	21-7-1-3	12-17-3-0	4-6-0-0	L3
San Jose	62	33	22	4	3	178	159	72	19-9-2-0	14-13-2-3	3-6-1-0	W1
Dallas	63	33	26	1	3	165	171	70	18-12-0-2	15-14-1-1	5-3-1-1	W4
Colorado	64	33	27	3	1	168	173	70	18-13-0-1	15-14-3-0	7-2-1-0	W4
Los Angeles	64	29	23	5	7	138	137	70	16-13-0-4	13-10-5-3	3-5-1-1	W1
Calgary	63	28	24	5	6	151	173	67	16-9-1-3	12-14-4-3	4-2-2-2	L4
Minnesota	63	28	26	2	7	139	167	65	15-11-1-3	13-15-1-4	3-6-0-1	L1
Anaheim	63	27	26	4	6	161	178	64	16-13-2-0	11-13-2-6	6-2-0-2	L1
Edmonton	62	25	31	2	4	167	184	56	16-11-2-2	9-20-0-2	4-5-1-0	W1
Columbus	63	18	38	2	5	146	212	43	11-18-1-2	7-20-1-3	3-6-1-0	L3

d — division leaders ranked 1-2-3 regardless of points; a team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OTL (overtime loss) or SL (shootout loss) column.

Last night's results
Pittsburgh at Dallas
Toronto at Chicago
St. Louis at Edmonton
Buffalo at Anaheim
Tuesday's results
Florida 5 Toronto 3
Tampa Bay 2 Montreal 1
Phoenix 2 Vancouver 1 (SO)
Ottawa 1 Boston 0
San Jose 1 Philadelphia 0
Carolina 4 Nashville 3
Los Angeles 4 Minnesota 0
Washington 3 N.Y. Islanders 2 (OT)
Detroit 5 Columbus 2
Tonight's games
All times Eastern
New Jersey at Boston, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Montreal, 7 p.m.
N.Y. Islanders at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Florida at Winnipeg, 8:30 p.m.
Columbus at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Calgary at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
St. Louis at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Buffalo at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
New Jersey at Washington, 7 p.m.
Chicago at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
N.Y. Rangers at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Dallas at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
Calgary at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

TUESDAY

PANTHERS 5, MAPLE LEAFS 3

First Period
1. Florida, Goc 6 (Wolski) 0:13
2. Florida, Santorelli 8 (Skille, Gudbranson) 2:21
Penalty — Madden Fla (holding stick) 18:58.
Second Period
3. Toronto, Kessel 32 (Phaneuf, Lupul) 10:46 (pp)
4. Florida, Santorelli 9 (Fleischmann, Campbell) 13:54 (pp)
Penalties — Lupul Tor (hooking) 3:43, Bergenheim Fla (interference) 5:26, Weiss Fla (goaltender interference) 9:32, MacArthur Tor (boarding) 12:36.
Third Period
5. Florida, Garrison 14, 4:38 (pp)
6. Toronto, Kulemin 7 (Phaneuf, MacArthur) 8:48
7. Florida, Weiss 16 (Bergenheim) 9:49
8. Toronto, Lupul 24 (Kessel, Phaneuf) 17:22 (pp)
Penalties — Garrison Fla (hooking) 0:11, Liles Tor (interference) 3:40, Phaneuf Tor (tripping) 13:21, Garrison Fla (slashing) 17:16.
Shots on goal

Florida	4	9	10	—23
Toronto	9	7	15	—31

Goal — Florida: Theodore (W,17-11-6); Toronto: Reimer (L,11-11-4). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Florida: 2-4; Toronto: 2-5.
Referees — Stephen Walkom, Kyle Rehman.
Linesmen — Pierre Champoux, David Brisebois.
Attendance — 19,420 (18,819) at Toronto.

TUESDAY

LIGHTNING 2, CANADIENS 1

First Period
1. Tampa Bay, Stamkos 44 (Purcell, St. Louis) 8:42
2. Montreal, Desharnais 13, 16:02
Penalty — Commodore TB (interference) 10:37.
Second Period
3. Tampa Bay, Hall 2 (Malone, Wyman) 0:28
Penalties — Emelin Mtl (interference) 5:56, Staubitz Mtl (interference, misconduct), Malone TB (unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, game misconduct) 8:16, Connolly TB (tripping) 15:29, Kaberle Mtl (hooking) 17:27.
Third Period — No Scoring.
Penalties — Staubitz Mtl, Labrie TB (fighting) 3:47, Weber Mtl (high-sticking) 9:37.
Shots on goal

Montreal	9	9	6	—24
Tampa Bay	9	7	6	—22

Goal — Montreal: Price (L,22-24-9); Tampa Bay: Garon (W,21-16-4). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Montreal: 0-3; Tampa Bay: 0-3.
Attendance — 18,878 (19,204) at Tampa, Fla.

COYOTES 2, CANUCKS 1 (SO)

First Period
1. Vancouver, Edler 8 (Salo, D.Sedin) 14:56 (pp)
Penalties — Bieksa Vcr (high-sticking) 1:08, Vrbata Pho (holding) 8:55, Lapierre Vcr (interference) 12:08, Rozsival Pho (hooking) 14:46.
Second Period — No Scoring.
Penalties — Hansen Vcr, Aucoin Pho (slashing) 8:18, Tanev Vcr (tripping) 11:03.
Third Period
2. Phoenix, Whitney 19 (Yandle, Aucoin) 9:43
Penalties — Hanzal Pho (hooking) 1:18, Kassian Vcr (hooking) 13:04.
Overtime — No Scoring.
Penalties — None.
Shootout — Phoenix wins 2-0
Van (0) — Edler, miss; Raymond, miss. **Pho** (2) — Whitney, goal; Vrbata, miss; Boedker, goal.
Shots on goal

Vancouver	12	8	15	5	—40
Phoenix	12	12	11	0	—35

Goal — Vancouver: C.Schneider (L,14-5-1); Phoenix: Smith (W,29-14-7). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Vancouver: 1-3; Pho: 0-4.
Att. — 16,691 (17,135) at Glendale, Ariz.

SENATORS 1, BRUINS 0

First Period
1. Ottawa, Karlsson 15 (Michalek, Spezza) 14:44 (pp)
Penalties — Rolston Bos (tripping) 9:41, Seguin Bos (interference) 13:06, Foligno Ott (holding) 16:56.
Second Period — No Scoring.
Penalty — Lucic Bos (slashing) 12:39.
Third Period — No Scoring.
Penalties — Condra Ott (holding stick) 5:13, Foligno Ott (tripping) 9:37, Gonchar Ott (hooking) 17:51.
Shots on goal

Ottawa	13	18	7	—38
Boston	7	8	17	—32

Goal — Ottawa: Lehner (W,3-0-0); Boston: Thomas (L,26-13-0). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Ottawa: 1-3; Boston: 0-4.
Attendance — 17,565 (17,565) at Boston.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	PT
Malkin, Pgh	37	41	78
Stamkos, TB	44	32	76
Giroux, Pha	23	49	72

Last night's games not included

TENNIS

ATP

DUBAI CHAMPIONSHIPS

At Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Singles — Second Round
Novak Djokovic (1), Serbia, def. Sergiy Stakhovsky, Ukraine, 7-6 (5), 6-3.
Roger Federer (2), Switzerland, def. Feliciano Lopez, Spain, 7-5, 6-3.
Andy Murray (3), Britain, def. Marco Chiudinelli, Switzerland, 6-3, 6-4.
Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (4), France, def. Lukas Rosol, Czech Republic, 6-3, 6-4.
Tomas Berdych (5), Czech Republic, def. Lukas Lacko, Slovakia, 6-1, 6-2.
Mikhail Youzhny, Russia, def. Mardy Fish (6), United States, 6-2, 7-6 (0).
Janko Tipsarevic (7), Serbia, def. Flavio Cipolla, Italy, 6-7 (2), 6-1, 6-1.
Juan Martin del Potro (8), Argentina, def. Andrey Golubev, Kazakhstan, 6-4, 6-2.

DELRAY BEACH INTERNATIONAL

At Delray Beach, Fla.
Singles — Second Round
John Isner (1), United States, def. Ryan Sweeting, United States, 6-3, 6-4.
Marinko Matosevic, Australia, def. Alex Bogomolov Jr. (6), Russia, 4-6, 6-1, 6-3.
Ernests Gulbis, Latvia, def. Steve Darcis, Belgium, 6-7 (6), 6-1, 6-3.

ATP-WTA

MEXICAN OPEN

At Acapulco, Mexico
Men's Singles — Second Round
Nicolas Almagro (2), Spain, def. Benoit Paire, France, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.
Santiago Giraldo, Colombia, def. Marcel Granollers (7), Spain, 6-4, 6-3.
Fernando Verdasco (8), Spain, def. Juan Ignacio Chela, Argentina, 6-4, 6-2.
Carlos Berlocq, Argentina, def. Potito Starace, Italy, 6-1, 6-4.
Women Singles — Second Round
Roberta Vinci (1), Italy, def. Stephanie Foretz Gacon, France, 7-5, 6-4
Irina-Camelia Begu (4), Romania, def. Anna Tatishvili, Georgia, 6-3, 6-1.
Estrella Cabeza Candela (7), Spain, def. Melinda Czink, Hungary, 6-4, 7-6 (5).

WTA

MALAYSIAN OPEN

At Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Singles — Second Round
Petra Martic (5), Croatia, def. Kurumi Nara, Japan, 6-2, 3-6, 6-0.
Hsieh Su-Wei, Taiwan, def. Casey Dellacqua, Australia, 6-1, 7-5.

SOCCER

EXHIBITION

Croatia 1 Sweden 3
England 2 Netherlands 3
Greece 1 Belgium 1
Italy 0 United States 1
Germany 1 France 2
Poland 0 Portugal 0
At Limassol, Cyprus
Armenia 3 **Canada 1**

LACROSSE

NLL

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	Pct.	GF	GA	GB
Philadelphia	7	4	3	.571	79	89	—
Toronto	7	4	3	.571	85	82	—
Rochester	8	3	5	.375	102	102	1½
Buffalo	6	2	4	.333	70	76	1½

WEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	Pct.	GF	GA	GB
Colorado	7	6	1	.857	93	94	—
Calgary	7	5	2	.714	95	75	1
Minnesota	7	4	3	.571	88	81	2
Edmonton	6	2	4	.333	64	61	3½
Washington	7	1	6	.143	65	91	5

Saturday's games
All times Eastern
Rochester at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Washington at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Colorado at Buffalo, 7:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Friday, Mar. 9
Philadelphia at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.
Calgary at Edmonton, 9 p.m.

TRANSACTIONS

BASEBALL

MLB

LEAGUE OFFICE—Suspended free agent minor league LHP Justin Dowdy 50 games for refusing to take a drug test.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

ST. LOUIS CARDINALS — Agreed to terms with C Bryan Anderson, RHP Mitchell Boggs, 3B Matt Carpenter, OF Adron Chambers, RHP Maikel Cleto, OF Allen Craig, C Tony Cruz, 2B Daniel Descalso, RHP Brandon Dickson, RHP Chuckie Fick, LHP Sam Freeman, 3B David Freese, 2B Tyler Greene, 1B Mark Hamilton, OF Jon Jay, OF Erik Komatsu, 2B Pete Kozma, RHP Lance Lynn, RHP Adam Ottavino, RHP Adam Reifer, OF Shane Robinson, LHP Marc Rzepczynski, RHP Fernando Salas and RHP Eduardo Sanchez on one-year contracts.

FOOTBALL

CFL

CALGARY STAMPEDERS—Named Rick Campbell defensive coordinator.
WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS—Re-signed OL Andre Douglas.

HOCKEY

NHL

TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING—Assigned F Pierre-Cedric Labrie, F Trevor Smith & D Evan Oberg to Norfolk (AHL). Recalled D Keith Aulie from Norfolk.

AHL

BRIDGEPORT SOUND TIGERS—Agreed to terms with D Russ Sinkewich.

SOCCER

MLS

L.A. GALAXY—Signed G Bill Gaudette. Waived G Nick Noble.

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Miami	27	7	.794	—
d-Chicago	28	8	.778	—
Indiana	22	12	.647	5
d-Philadelphia	21	14	.600	6½
Orlando	22	13	.629	5½
Atlanta	20	14	.588	7
New York	17	18	.486	10½
Boston	16	17	.485	10½
Milwaukee	14	20	.412	13
Cleveland	13	19	.406	13
Detroit	11	25	.306	17
New Jersey	11	25	.306	17
Toronto	10	24	.294	17
Washington	7	27	.206	20
Charlotte	4	28	.125	22

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
d-Oklahoma City	27	7	.794	—
d-San Antonio	24	10	.706	3
d-L.A. Clippers	20	12	.625	6
Dallas	21	14	.600	6½
Houston	21	14	.600	6½
L.A. Lakers	20	14	.588	7
Memphis	19	15	.559	8
Portland	18	16	.529	9
Denver	18	17	.514	9½
Minnesota	18	17	.514	9½
Utah	15	18	.455	11½
Golden State	13	18	.419	12½
Phoenix	14	20	.412	13
Sacramento	12	22	.353	15
New Orleans	8	26	.235	19

d — division leaders ranked in top four positions regardless of record.

Last night's results
Orlando at Washington
Oklahoma City at Philadelphia
Golden State at Atlanta
Milwaukee at Boston
Charlotte at Detroit
Cleveland at New York
Toronto at New Orleans
Dallas at Memphis
Portland at Denver
Houston at Utah
Chicago at San Antonio
Minnesota at L.A. Lakers
Tuesday's results
Boston 86 Cleveland 83
Indiana 102 Golden State 78
Philadelphia 97 Detroit 68
Chicago 99 New Orleans 95
Houston 88 Toronto 85
Milwaukee 119 Washington 118
New Jersey 93 Dallas 92
Sacramento 103 Utah 96
Minnesota 109 L.A. Clippers 97
Tonight's games
All times Eastern
Oklahoma City at Orlando, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Miami at Portland, 10:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
Memphis at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Milwaukee at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
New Jersey at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Denver at Houston, 8 p.m.
Dallas at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Golden State at Philadelphia, 8 p.m.
Charlotte at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Miami at Utah, 9 p.m.
Sacramento at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Phoenix, 10:30 p.m.

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‘Ready to take it to the next level’

Jays’ Romero still on rise after bumpy road to big leagues Left-hander now undisputed staff ace in Toronto

It was a challenging climb to the top for Blue Jays pitcher Ricky Romero.

Expectations were high for the first-round pick, who toiled in the minors for years before breaking through in the majors.

The team was patient with the now 27-year-old left-hander and it paid off.

“Now that I look back at it, I’m thankful that I went through those times,” Romero said Wednesday in Dunedin, Fla. “Being in double-A for two-and-a-half years, I learned a lot about myself as a person.... I was able to learn to deal with failure.”

There were plenty of trying times after the Los Angeles native was taken sixth overall in the 2005 amateur draft. He struggled with a 16-23 record in Toronto’s minor-league system.

But the Blue Jays felt he was ready for a look in 2009 and in 29 starts as a rookie, Romero posted a solid 13-9 mark with a 4.30 earned-run average.

“When I got to the big leagues, I wasn’t going to let one bad start get to me or get to my head,” Romero said. “It was just move on to the next one.”

Manager John Farrell said it’s not uncommon for first-rounders to face challenges in the minors.

“Everyone assumes they’re going to get to the big leagues as a first-rounder so when they finally get there, they somewhat relax and say, ‘OK, I’ve made it to where my draft number has said I should be,’” he said.

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Blue Jays left-hander Ricky Romero pitches on Tuesday in Dunedin, Fla.

Early arms race

Ricky Romero anchors a starting rotation that is still very much unsettled.

- Brandon Morrow is likely the No. 2 starter with Brett Cecil, Henderson Alvarez and Dustin McGowan favourites for the next three slots.

“And then things come out.”

Romero continued to make strides in 2010, going 14-9 and trimming his ERA to 3.73. He was signed to a long-term contract that summer and Romero’s ascent was complete when he was named opening day starter last year.

Romero went on to post a 15-11 record with a 2.92 ERA in 2011, his best campaign yet.

The six-foot, 215-pound left-hander likes to keep the mood rather light, often joking around at spring training and spitting sunflower seeds wherever he goes. But Romero is serious when he needs to be and is ready to be the staff’s workhorse.

“You see the determination and the work that we’re putting in,” he said. “We’re ready to take it to the next level.”

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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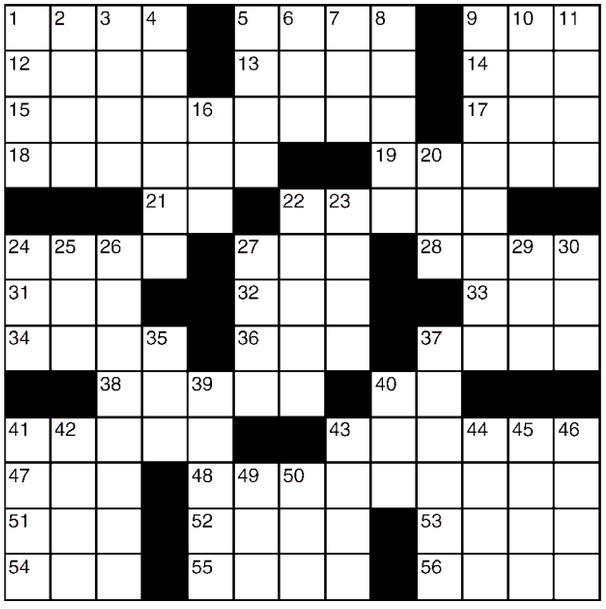
Crossword



Across

1 Airport schedule data (Abbr.)
5 Mop the deck
9 Kimono closer
12 Anger
13 Sit for a photo
14 Pal of Wynken and Blynken
15 Ancient Mariner's burden
17 Right angle
18 Theatrical
19 American emblem
21 Performing
22 Mythical lecher
24 Geek
27 — capita
28 Billions of years
31 Away from WSW
32 Raw rock
33 Potential syrup
34 Probability
36 Eggs
37 Wan
38 Hidden supply
40 — usual
41 One of The Donald's exes
43 Snare
47 Venusian vessel?
48 Colonial sewer
51 "— Doubtfire"
52 Island neckwear
53 Arctic diving birds
54 "Mayday!"
55 Ticklish Muppet
56 For fear that

Down

1 Historic periods
2 Pinball no-no
3 Actress Jessica
4 Neptune or Poseidon
5 Nimble
6 Court
7 Fool
8 Surround
9 144 units
10 Weevil's morsel
11 Not busy
16 Coffee break hour
20 Favorable vote
22 Wait on
23 Vicinity
24 Ultramodernist
25 Conclusion
26 Relief provider
27 Milne bruin
29 "Unh-unh"
30 Agent
35 Actor Mineo
37 Star-related
39 Larry the — Guy
40 Whatever number
41 "— the word"
42 Roundish hairstyle
43 Old U.S. gas brand
44 Libertine
45 Requests
46 "Hey, you!"
49 Conger, for one
50 Quarterback Tebow

▶ Yeterday's answer

H	Y	P	O	■	D	V	R	■	A	P	P	S
A	E	O	N	■	I	I	I	■	V	A	L	E
P	A	R	T	I	S	A	N	■	E	R	I	E
S	H	E	A	T	H	■	G	A	R	T	E	R
■	■	■	P	E	R	■	S	L	A	Y	■	■
A	L	P	■	M	A	P	■	A	G	I	L	E
B	O	A	T	■	G	E	E	■	E	N	I	D
C	Y	R	U	S	■	A	N	T	■	G	T	O
■	■	T	R	O	D	■	G	U	T	■	■	■
G	L	E	N	N	E	■	A	F	R	A	I	D
E	U	R	O	■	P	A	R	T	I	C	L	E
E	A	R	N	■	O	D	D	■	T	H	I	N
S	U	E	S	■	T	O	E	■	E	Y	E	S

Sudoku

		5	7		2			
	2					1	7	
4	3				9	8		
6		3	2				9	
				7				
	8				5	6		4
		8	1				4	3
	7	9					6	
			3		6	2		

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

5	6	8	3	7	2	4	1	9
2	9	3	1	4	8	5	6	7
4	7	1	6	5	9	3	2	8
6	4	2	9	8	3	7	5	1
3	8	5	7	1	6	9	4	2
7	1	9	4	2	5	6	8	3
9	2	6	5	3	1	8	7	4
8	5	7	2	9	4	1	3	6
1	3	4	8	6	7	2	9	5

Send a KISS

You can now post your kiss, and read even more kisses, at metronews.ca/kiss.

YOU, All of my life I have tried to find someone who could see the world through my eyes. I thought I walked this earth alone until I met you. **M**

Lady Gaga
Thank you for always being there and strong for us Little Monsters. You give me hope and courage. Congratulations on the Born This Way Foundation!!! PAWS UP! **LADY ALA**

meme, when i first saw you walk by me i thought to myself " i need you a.s.a.p over there" but i was to shy of a guy because you where to much and so was work. so here i am today giving you a kiss; TC!!!
BILLY

Doctor what can i do? why does it have to be like that?
CURE ME

Today's horoscope

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20
If you can't get excited about what you have planned to do today then, obviously, you should be doing something else.

♉ Taurus April 21-May 21
All those worries and woes you have been carrying around with you suddenly seem irrelevant.

♊ Gemini May 22-June 21
You can be quite sensitive to mood changes in your environment and that skill will be useful today.

♋ Cancer June 22-July 22
A surge of negative cosmic activity makes you believe that certain people are against you. They're not. You need to lighten up and smile.

♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23
Stop trying to control everything that happens and let fate guide you. That applies to all areas but in particular to joint financial issues.

♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22
Today's cosmic influences will encourage you to be open about your feelings — but not so open that your heart rules your head entirely.

♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23
If someone approaches you with an idea or proposal today, don't turn them down flat. Listen.

♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Keep routine tasks to a minimum and don't worry if you fall behind in your schedule. Be flexible.

♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21
Others may be hopping from one foot to the other in anger today but you cannot be bothered.

♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20
It's good that you don't take what others believe as a personal insult to your own values. Be open.

♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18
Something is going to happen whether you like it or not, and you know it. So why are you still fighting the future? Adapt yourself.

♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20
Have you been making use of your skills? If you are honest, you will admit you have fallen a bit short lately. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Caption contest

MICHAEL CONROY/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DAVID GOLDMAN/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WIN!

You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in Wednesday's Metro.

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